

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1, 3-17, 19-38 and 40 are pending. Claims 1, 17 and 38 are independent. Claims 1, 3, 4, 13, 17, 28, 38 and 40 are hereby amended. Claims 2, 18 and 39 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of any subject matter. No new matter is added by these amendments. Support for the amended recitations in the claims is found throughout the specification and from the canceled claims. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled.

Claims 17 and 40 have been objected to because of informalities. Claims 17 and 40 have been amended herein. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

Claims 2-16, 18-37, 39 and 40 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant submits that claims 2, 18 and 39 have been canceled and incorporated into claims 1, 17 and 38, respectively. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

The specification was objected to. Specifically, the Examiner objected to the abstract. Applicant has amended the abstract to comply with the USPTO rules and procedures. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,736,390 to Ward et al.

Claims 17 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,538,281 to Rajan et al.

The allowable subject matter of claims 2, 18 and 39 has been incorporated into independent claims 1, 17 and 38, respectively. Therefore, independent claims 1, 17 and 38 are believed to be patentable.

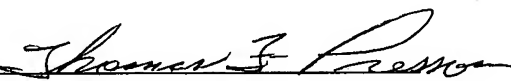
CONCLUSION

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicant respectfully requests early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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